26 July 1972

Dear Harold:

This is to thank you very much -- and, via the enclosed carbon copy, Larry Finley -- for the clips from the Chicago paper regarding Janus, Peking Man et al. For Finley's benefit I'm enclosing photocopies of the two AP stories which aroused my suspicions. Please be kind enough to forward them to him.

First of all, I think there is no point in pursuing this matter more deeply now than merely to keep an eye open for any truly interesting developments. The main reason is that from the Sun-Times clip of 3July1972 a story on Janus by Richard Foster, I gather that Janus has very little idea of what he's talking about. There are gross errors, including the idea that it was only AFTER Pearl Harbor that it was decided to try to ship the Peking Man relics out and try to get them to this country. The standard American story always has been, without variation, that they had arrived at Chinwangtao, a port some 200 miles northeast of Peking, along with the company of U.S.Marines who had been stationed at the American embassy in Peking, who were to be shipped out on the S.S. President Harrison, which had been diverted from Manila for this purpose specifically. I know about this because the diversion stranded my wife at Manila for six months. Pearl Harbor happened while the Harrison was en route to Chinwangtao, the Marines were interned for the duration, and the Harrison's master ran her aground near Shanghai and surrendered with his crew for internment.

What happened to the bones from there on is the mystery, of course. But the standard American supposition that the Japanese either did not know what they were or did not care and threw them into the sea is, of course, nonsense. They are very careful about such things, and their interest and knowledge of such things at the time is indicated by several facts: 1, they damn well got hold of some Java Man relics in Indonesia which the Americans found in Tokyo after the war; 2, they gave Americans interned in Peking who might have known about the Peking Man relics a very bad time because they could not be found, and 3, they were found after the war to have also in Tokyo museums other artifacts and bones from the Peking Man site, but of a later period of excavation.

For Finley's benefit in case he wants to bone up on this, there is what is purported to be a full account of the mystery in the publication of the American Museum of Natural History in New York, Natural History, for November 1971, by the museum's curator who has had most to do with Peking Man. It may be accepted as the standard American version, I think, but is full of curious omissions and avoidances to anyone who has any first hand knowledge of the case..

Again, for Finley's benefit, I am inclined to think now that one of two things happened. The more likely is that the Japanese did recover them, and that the Americans got them back quietly after the war, but that in the meantime it became obvious that Chiang Kai-shek was going down. At least it was obvious to our better informed diplomats and intelligence people. This supposes that the Americans who recovered them, if they did, made a decision to keep quiet rather than to hand them over to Chiang, or to let it be known that they were in American possession in view of the fact that the Communists were about to take over in China.

If this is what happened, the American position changed after the Reds came to power. We were now in the position of having stolen the relics, as the Communists charged, and the possibility of using them for bargaining purposes also became ~~imaginable~~ conceivable, especially if a situation should develop where the Chinese might want something from us very badly.

The other possibility is that the relics were got out some time before the evacuation of the Marines late in November, 1941, and that the business of sending crates and boxes to Chinwangtao was a cover operation of some kind. I can think of at least one individual who would have delighted in pulling such a stunt, a man who left Peking many months before Pearl Harbor. The Natural History article makes it clear that this was considered -- that is, getting them out ahead of time, although naturally no cover operation is mentioned -- but that it was rejected with the possibility left open that the decision might have to be changed. Very high Chinese who were responsible for the relics agreed, the article says.

What the Sun-Times stuff seems to make clear is that Janus seems to be entirely innocent of any of this background and ignorant of what he's into. And I suspect that his Greek Heritage Foundation has considerably less to do with his activity than the Harvard Club, which provides a connection with Henry Kissinger, possibly personal, and adds significance to the probability that their paths ~~appear to~~ may have crossed while Janus was in the Far East.

Note the first AP story, datelined Tokyo. It's main thrust is to plug the idea that Janus and his group were told everywhere in China that the war would be over by Aug. 15. The story is that they were told this by minor Chinese officials. Minor, to be sure, but universally. This is not only sheer fantasy but shows how little Janus realizes what he's doing. No one who knows anything about the Chinese can imagine their peddling such a yarn. The mere idea of their talking this way is simply out of the question. The question remains where Janus got such an idea and why he peddled it. The only reasonable answer is that someone asked him to. He obviously knows so little about the whole situation that even if he could make up such a story the question remains why he would want to do so.

Of course, he could be a past master at appearing ignorant and stupid, but again, why should he have such a motive ? I think it more likely he was doing a favor for Henry or someone like him.

Again, I'm most grateful for the Sun-Times clips, and if Larry is out any personal expense in this business I'd be more than glad to reimburse him. I'd need his address.

Thanks again to you both.

Jim

jdw